



*Increasing access to affordable,
quality health care*



Annual Report
June 2011
June 2012

Who We Are

Our Mission

To improve the health of all Floridians by promoting sustainable access to affordable, effective health care.

A Voice With and For Consumers

We approach advocacy from a consumer perspective, engaging patients, community members, advocacy leaders, and health care providers to participate in health access campaigns.

Coalition Builder

We build statewide capacity to address health care injustices through partner collaboration, strategic campaigns, education, training, and technical assistance.

Trusted Resource in the Media

We provide a unique perspective to covering consumer health issues. Florida CHAIN's leadership is represented broadly across niche and mainstream media, and consumers are often referred and interviewed to tell their story to the public.

Consumer Health Policy Expert

Our analysis of state health policy is widely disseminated and referenced by funders, advocates, the media, and policymakers statewide and nationally. With our timely, in-depth health policy reports and administrative advocacy, we've successfully challenged anti-consumer policies.

Our Impact This Year

Affordable Care Act

Florida CHAIN increased its leadership in support of the federal health care law and amplified the collective voice of consumers, business, young adults, seniors, and other allied organizations in support with us. In the past year, we began building a strong statewide coalition focused on bringing the health benefits of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to Floridians, with almost 40 participating partners.

At the local level, we ramped up education and consumer involvement on the ACA. We developed a small business training program for small business owners about tax credits and other benefits in the ACA, in conjunction with Chambers of Commerce across the state. We also educated seniors about improvements to Medicare through the ACA at local town hall events, including one in Palm Beach County with Congressman Ted Deutch which was attended by 150 area seniors.

At the state level, Florida CHAIN continued to monitor and publicize the State's lack of implementation efforts while also coordinating earned media events to highlight benefits of the ACA around the time of the ACA anniversary and Supreme Court hearings. We recruited and trained consumer spokespeople to participate in ACA Roundtables in Miami, Orlando, and Tampa with Health and Human Service (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. We also hosted town hall meetings in five cities across the state with Senate Minority Leader Nan Rich and House Minority Leader Ron Saunders





along with dozens of state legislators to discuss the urgency of implementing the ACA for the benefit of Floridians.

At the federal level, Florida CHAIN challenged the State's request for exemptions from important consumer protections, including the health insurance Medical Loss Ratio (MLR) requirement provided under the ACA. In an unprecedented private insurance campaign for Florida advocates, CHAIN led efforts to both inform and engage consumer advocates and insurance policy holders, resulting in an organizational sign-on letter and over 3,000 signatures on a petition requesting HHS to deny the State's request for an exemption. The campaign successfully ended with HHS rejecting the State's waiver request, and as a result, Florida health insurance policyholders expect to be receiving rebates in the mail this summer.

Medicaid

Florida CHAIN continues to be the statewide voice for the most vulnerable populations, many of whom depend on Medicaid for life-saving health care. We have been unrelenting in our fight to prevent the expansion of the Medicaid managed care experiment after state lawmakers set in motion a plan to extend it to all 67 counties and almost all of Florida's three million Medicaid recipients. The new plan, which is pending approval from the federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), also imposed additional financial hardships on Medicaid recipients.

We hosted public forums across the state to educate Medicaid families, organizational partners, and legislative champions about the proposed changes. We reached almost 1,000 consumers and allies through the educational sessions and helped identify consumers to share their stories in the news media.

We gathered the support of 107 organizations that signed on with CHAIN in a letter to CMS opposing the State's plan to expand Medicaid managed care statewide, and over 3,000 individuals sent an email to CMS opposing the Medicaid managed care expansion as part of an online campaign developed by CHAIN with its partners. We also pursued an editorial board strategy and successfully secured favorable editorials in five daily newspapers in Florida.



Florida CHAIN won a decisive victory for Medicaid families when CMS denied the State's proposal to charge \$10 premiums and \$100 emergency room co-pays for non-emergencies, as part of the proposed Medicaid changes. Florida CHAIN led the campaign against these financial hardships with written arguments and grassroots advocacy directed at federal level. We also highlighted Medicaid families who would be hurt by such financial barriers.

Children's Health

More than 500,000 of Florida's children do not have health insurance, landing our state 49th in the nation for percentage of uninsured children. Florida CHAIN took the lead on a new project this year to establish a brand new children's health care campaign in Florida called KidsWell Florida. The goal of KidsWell Florida is for every Florida child to have quality, affordable health coverage.



CHAIN is working in partnership with children’s health experts and advocacy leaders across Florida to convene a statewide collaboration of families, service providers, and business and civic leaders joining forces with other Floridians to close gaps in public and private health insurance for children. KidsWell is particularly unique for CHAIN because we are partnering with some of the lead children’s advocacy groups in the nation and the state.

Our focus in the first phase of this project has been campaign planning and preparation for our public launch. We recently hosted the official KidsWell Florida kick-off webinar with over 100 participants and have already generated press coverage and interest in the KidsWell initiative as a result of the webinar announcements.

Publicity & Media Presence

An Informative Media Presence

Florida CHAIN has always been a trusted resource for the media; however, our impact this year has far surpassed our anticipated earned media goals. With 98 media hits citing CHAIN reports or quoting CHAIN staff, we became more than just a trusted policy expert, but also a sought-out source for our expertise.

CHAIN was quoted on issues related to Medicaid and the managed care waiver proposed by the State, insurance rebates for policyholders, state budget cuts to the Medicaid program, extended student health coverage under the ACA, expanded Medicaid coverage for children, the medical loss ratio requirement in the ACA and other related private insurance consumer protections. CHAIN released statements, held press conferences, or spoke to the media about the ACA anniversary, the Supreme Court proceedings and earlier lower court challenges, and to publicize the Rick Makes Me Sick campaign with consumers and other partners.



CHAIN was quoted in nearly all Florida’s major newspapers, including the Miami Herald, Tampa Bay Times, Orlando Sentinel, Palm Beach Post, Sun Sentinel, and the Florida Independent, in addition to the Florida Current, Health News Florida and several local radio and cable access stations. In national news, CHAIN was interviewed for stories in the Washington Post, the Associated Press, American Medical News, and National Public Radio.

Informing Engaging Training

Communicating the Issues

Florida CHAIN is the hub of consumer health care information, education, and advocacy across the state. Our weekly CHAIN Reaction newsletter continues to be a highly respected source of health care updates and information. This year, we also promoted a regular health policy blog through CHAIN Reaction and on our website to help communicate the

“behind the scenes” debates occurring around important Medicaid and ACA issues. We assisted consumers in writing letters to the editor in support of better health care options and provided action alerts and policy reports to keep our advocacy allies and others informed.

Engaging advocates, policymakers, allies, and the public



Florida CHAIN increased our social media presence immensely over the past year. We now have over 400 Twitter followers, compared to 193 at this time last year, and share photos, consumer stories, and news through Facebook with 600 followers.

We also increased our in-person conversations with individuals and families across the state through dozens of town halls on ACA implementation and Medicaid issues, always in partnership with local lawmakers and other advocates, where members of the public and health care consumers can share their concerns and advocate for solutions.



Florida CHAIN reached out specifically to state lawmakers on all of our priority issues, providing talking points, policy analysis, and background information on important health care legislation. We also hosted briefing sessions with state and federal legislators. At the state regulatory level, CHAIN's Executive Director was appointed for a second term as the only consumer advocate to the Florida Health Insurance Advisory Board and will serve in this role alongside state agency officials, health insurers, and business executives until 2015.

Presentations and Trainings

We developed and presented informational sessions on Medicaid, Medicare, and about ACA benefits for college students, seniors, small businesses, state and Congressional lawmakers, and funders. We hosted numerous training sessions and webinars for Chambers of Commerce membership, nonprofit organizations, and CPA's about how to take advantage and save health care dollars with the ACA tax credits.

Involving Consumers

Consumers are the heart of Florida CHAIN's work. As such we increased our focus on documenting consumer experiences with the health care system.

We worked with health care consumers and helped them share their stories at town hall meetings, in the media, as part of public testimony and in one-on-one meetings with legislators. This year, we specifically engaged small business owners who wanted to share the challenges they've had providing health insurance coverage to employees as costs have increased, and we

produced two online videos highlighting business owners who received money back from the ACA tax credits. In addition, several Florida CHAIN consumers were interviewed and featured in many major health care news stories. Meet a few of our story sharers:

Candice Brown, a registered nurse, was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease at age 30. At the time, fortunately, she had health insurance. Since then, the company she worked for went out of



business and now she can't get affordable health insurance because she has a pre-existing condition. She pays \$1200 a month for the only policy she could find to cover her.

Dr. Hansel Leavengood is a veterinarian and business owner at Dale Mabry Animal Hospital in Tampa. He said he values being able to offer health insurance to his employees because it's the right thing to do and is important to keeping quality employees on staff. As a result of providing health insurance, his business has received a tax credit of \$13,000

over the last two years thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

Sara has a Masters in Public Health from the University of South Florida. She works two part-time jobs, but neither offers health insurance. Thanks to the ACA, she was covered under her parent's health insurance when she had a health scare and had to see a doctor and take medication for an infection.

Bringing Diverse Groups Together

Florida CHAIN brings a diverse collection of constituencies together to improve Florida's health care system.

We partnered with Florida Small Business Development Center and Small Business Majority to do a series of free online learning sessions on health insurance coverage, tax credits, and important provisions of the ACA. We also co-hosted a tour of health insurance and tax credit informational

sessions for small business owners with Hispanic Health Initiatives, Small Business Majority, and the Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

We joined the Health Care Cuts Don't Heal coalition with health care providers, Florida hospitals, and other health service providers to oppose the Governor and Legislature's budget cuts to Medicaid and other safety net programs.



We also increased partner involvement in the Florida Health Alliance, a statewide collaboration to advance ACA implementation efforts.

Funding Board & Staff

Florida CHAIN receives financial support from a diverse and growing number of foundations, organizations, and corporations. In addition, we work closely in collaboration with a variety of health care stakeholder organizations in Florida to share resources, expertise, and capacity to improve the health care system for all Floridians.

NEW Funders Supporting Florida CHAIN's Work This Year

Consumers Union
Herndon Alliance

Medicare Rights Center



Foundations

Atlantic Philanthropies
Allegany Franciscan Ministries All Regions Fund
Community Catalyst, ACA Implementation Fund
Community Catalyst, Special Opportunities Fund
Nathan Cummings Foundation
Families USA Foundation
Health Foundation of South Florida

Corporations

Astra Zeneca
Eli Lilly
Florida Blue
Pfizer

Key Partner Organizations

Alliance for Pediatric Therapies	Florida Council for Community Mental Health	Know Your Care
Catalyst Miami	Florida Council of Nurse Practitioners	Medicare Rights Center
Children's Movement of Florida	Florida Covering Kids and Families	Mi LOLA
Consumers Union	Florida Health Care Association	National Physicians Alliance
Florida AARP	Florida Legal Services	Organize Now
Florida Academy of Family Physicians	Florida Pediatric Society	Progress Florida
Florida Bar Elder Law Section	Florida PIRG	SEIU
Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy	Health Council of South Florida	Small Business Majority
Florida Consumer Action Network	Herndon Alliance	Tampa Bay Healthcare Collaborative
	Hispanic Health Initiatives	United Way of Florida
		Young Invincibles

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